HOW THE INDIANS EXTERMINATED THE CHINESE IN MONO

A Chinaman by the name of Tai lived in a small store he ran in Bridgeport near the river. His main trade was with Indians to whom he sold cheap calico, shoes, overalls, beads, trinkets, etc. Sometimes gambling with the Indians.

A Walker Lake Indian from the reservation had gone to Bridgeport for a brief period of time. When he hadn't returned after a long absence, some of his tribe went to Bridgeport to learn of his absence. The Indians there had presumed he had gone back to the reservation. Some reported the last they saw of him, he was around the Chinese store. The sheriff learning this took a hand in interviewing the Chinaman. Within a few days, a human trunk, armless, legless and the head removed was found on a bar just below the Chinese store. It showed signs of having been pickled in brine. In searching the Chinese store a barrel containing pickling brine was found and the Chinese arrested.

The Indians were up in arms and soon a large delegation of Indians from the reservation demanded release of the Chinaman, so they could have their revenge. A good lawyer by the name of Parker took the case to defend the Chinaman. When it went to trial and to the jury, no one would swear that the torso found was from that particular Indian and the Chinaman was cleared. Where upon a dozen stalwart Indians entered the courtroom, pounced upon the shrieking Chinaman who was pleading for mercy, took him to the edge of town and proceeded to carve him up alive. First cutting off his ears. then nose, then amputating different parts of his body until dead. The sheriff, Constable, etc. were reported to be out of town. However, I believe this was questionable and that it was a put up job. I was often told by residents there of hearing dreadful shrieks and pleadings of the Chinese.

About three months later, a Chinese living in a cabin near Coleville was found shot through the heart, a rope had been tied around his neck and his body pulled some distance into the brush behind the cabin. Evidence pointed to a certain Indian but no arrest was made.

After this murder, there remained four Chinese in the valley. Lee, a cook at Barnett's Hotel, Lung who had a small garden on the Gulickson ranch and did odd jobs, and two Chinese on our upper ranch where they were raising produce for market. Each had about ten acres of sage brush. Their names were Wong and Sot. They had cabins about one-eighth of a mile apart.

I was about sixteen years old at this time. One dark night in December, Chinese Lee boldly broke into our living room, a sight to behold--his face covered with blood and brain matter . He shouted: "Ah Wong, lla no more, Injun killum Ah Wong." Father lit a lantern and handed it to me. We then started to investigate stopping at the middle ranch to get Joe Harvey. He had bought 100 tons of hay and was feeding 200 head of cattle there. Upon reaching Wong's cabin I walked in ahead, finding nothing in the first room I glanced into the next room. There I saw the most ghastly sight as I gaped on Wong's skull. He was on his back. The whole top of his head had been blown forward on his lap. His skull the inner part was visible--all blood and brains blown from his head , and the walls of the room were literly splattered with both. I rushed out to get fresh air. Although sick at my stomach and near fainting, I soon recovered.

The Constable's search for the Indian murderer led him to the Mountain House in Nevada where this Indian, a nephew of Captain Jim, a Washo Chief had his teepee. He readily admitted killing the Chinaman. When they asked him why he did it, he said: "Injun no

like Chineman." This being in Nevada, the Constable had no jurisdiction, he enticed the Indian across the State Line and read the warrant. The Indian was sent to trial, was convicted and was put in Folsom Prison for life.

One morning before the Indian trial as Father entered the yard, he found both Lung and Sot with heavy packs of their belongings. They told him they were afraid of Indians and wanted to go to Wellington, 20 miles away and would pay $10.00 for someone to take them there. Father asked me if I wanted the job. I was anxious to make money and decided to go. Dad had a buckboard with interchangeable shafts or tongue. He removed the shafts and quickly attached the tongue and with a good driving team we were soon ready to go. I was undisturbed until Dad called me aside and said: "Vic, I don't think there is a particle of danger, but if the Indians are really after the Chinamen over take you, don't offer any resistance." The Chinese had several fire arms loaded and handy at all times. However, the Chinese were delivered safely and I got the $10.00.

Lee, the Barnett cook,had left the valley immediately after Wong was murdered. After a period of time the Indian that was sent to Folsom made a break for liberty by swimming the American River. Guards had shot at him but he suceeded in reaching the opposite bank when a Hotchkiss cannon was fired and his body riddled with bullets. The San Francisco Examiner printed the story in full on the front page. Someone in the valley unwisely must have repeated the story in the presence of the Indians. The Indians, believing the whites deliberately sent the Indian there and then murdered him. His uncle, long-haired Captain Jim, a Washo Chief held a council of war and soon Signal Fires were burning calling the Indians to rally. Soon the

Indians had their war paint on and were dancing the War Dance in the lower part of the valley. All Indians kept secluded from the whites. The whites quickly tried to form a Militia and asked the governor for f ire arms. Instead arrangements were made to send a troop of Calvary from The Presidio at a moments notice. There was talk of sending all women and children from the valley. We were in a high state of nerves. We had no running water in the house. Father filled a barrel for the house. He also had an ax handy, a Shot Gun and a Winchester Rifle loaded. He was fearful of a fire and a night attack.

The whites were meeting daily at 2 O'clock to discuss matters and hear reports. One day an Indian came into the meeting, his face cove red with a blanket, which he held so his eyes alone were visible. A group of men held a whispering conversation thinking to give the Indian an earful. A speaker then spoke up saying: "The Big Chief at The Presidio would be sending 500 hundred soldiers with 5 mules loaded with ammunition and the Indians would have to scatter for their lives."

This Indian soon strode from the room and the next morning the Indians broke camp and departed. War paint was taken from their faces and once again they were mingling with the whites and every one was happy.

Note

I feel sure the account of Chinese Tai will be told around Bridgeport for several generations and the murder of AhWong will be handed down by my brothers and sisters for several generations. Slso by some others that lived in the Antelope Valley.

Victor H. Larson